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THE CHEMIST AND DRUGGIST is supplied regularly by arrangement with their respective Councils to all members of the following societies:—

- The Pharmaceutical Society of Victoria.
- The Pharmaceutical Society of New South Wales.
- The Pharmaceutical Society of Queensland.
- The Pharmaceutical Society of New Zealand.

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We print this extra issue of **THE CHEMIST AND DRUGGIST** in order to bring before the trade as promptly as possible the new Poisons Bill prepared by the Privy Council. There are many provisions in this Bill of considerable importance to chemists and druggists, who will no doubt discuss it with interest during the forthcoming month.

The leading features of the Bill are:—

1. To transfer from the Pharmaceutical Society to the Privy Council exclusive control of the regulations respecting the sale of poisons.
2. To give to the latter body power to frame and institute regulations for storing poisons.
3. To create a new class of poisons which may be sold by any person who will observe the provisions concerning labelling.
4. To prevent the sale of what may be called "medical poisons" to persons under seventeen years of age.
5. To repeal the exemption granted to patent medicines by the Pharmacy Act, 1868, and to provide that those containing poisonous ingredients should be labelled "To be used with caution."
6. To legalise the dealing in poisons by companies who employ a qualified assistant.
7. To create a distinction between medicines supplied on the prescription of medical men, and those supplied by a chemist and druggist without such prescription.

In the following pages we give a copy of the Bill, an analysis of its contents, a verbatim report of Lord Carlingford's speech in moving the second reading on Thursday evening last, and other matter.

As a convenience to Chemists and Druggists' Associations we may mention that we shall print some extra copies of this issue, and will supply them to associations as far as they go at the rate of 2s. 6d. per dozen post free. We suggest early application for these.

THE DEBATE.

Very little interest was manifested in the House of Lords on the second reading of the Poisons Bill. Lord Carlingford (President of the Privy Council), who explained its provisions, spoke for about half-an-hour, but it can hardly be said that his exposition of the principles of the proposed legislation cleared up any doubtful points. He made it very distinct that one of the chief objects of the Bill was to enable the Privy Council to make regulations "for the dispensing and sale of poisons," for which powers had been entrusted by the Act of 1868 to the Pharmaceutical Society, but which that Society had "not seen their way to exercise." In his comments on the patent-medicine trade he expressed in a marked manner his opinion that it was unfortunate that these compounds should bear the Government stamp. Subsequently he proceeded to expound the position in which his Bill would leave the patent-medicine trade. We commend his remarks to those interested. We confess to an inability to comprehend exactly what is the intention. It would seem obvious from the Bill that by the repeal of the first part of Section 16 of the Pharmacy Act, such compounds, if they contain any poison named in Parts 1 or 2 of the schedule, could be sold by chemists only, and Lord Carlingford seemed to assert that in the early part of his speech, when he said that the provision respecting the qualification of the seller would apply "whether the substance sold has a Government stamp affixed to it or not." But, in commenting on Clause 9, Lord Carlingford states several times, in different words, that they have refrained from defining how much poisonous matter a compound may contain to make it "a poison within the meaning of the law." He leaves that question to judicial investigation and "common sense." In commenting on his "scientific schedule," Lord Carlingford showed a tendency to approach enthusiasm. His description of carbolic acid as an example of one of the mild poisons "of which it would take a great deal to kill you," indicated some weakness in the mastery of the details of the measure, and leaves open a strong argument against the introduction of this third part of the schedule.

Lord Barrington said a few words concerning poisonous wall-papers. Lord Milltown protested against the short time which had been allowed for the study of the Bill, and the Duke of Marlborough pointed out that phosphorus was not included among the poisons, and also told the House that wholesale dealers did a considerable retail trade in poisons. Lord Carlingford said he thought it was likely phosphorus might be included in his scientifically-prepared schedule under some other name, and he promised to see about the alleged retail transactions of wholesale druggists. The Bill was then read a second time.

One might have supposed that if wholesale dealers do a retail trade, their transactions would not in such cases be of a wholesale character. But the Duke of Marlborough and Lord Carlingford seem to have some other views.

A BILL

INTITULED

AN ACT TO REGULATE THE SALE OF POISONS.

A.D. 1885.

Be it enacted by the Queen's most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

Short title.

1. This Act may be cited as the Poisons Act, 1885.

Labelling poisons.

[31 & 32 Vict. c. 121. s. 17.]

2. (1.) A person shall not sell any substance mentioned in any part of the First Schedule to this Act unless the box, bottle, vessel, wrapper, or cover in which such substance is contained is distinctly labelled with the name of such substance, and with the word "Poison," and with the name and address of the person selling the same.

(2.) Any person acting in contravention of this section shall be liable, on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding *five pounds*, and in case of a second or any subsequent conviction, not exceeding *ten pounds*.

Special regulation as to sale of arsenic.

[14 & 15 Vict. c. 13. ss. 3, 4, 6.]

3. (1.) A person shall not sell any arsenic to any person other than a person authorised to sell substances mentioned in the first and second parts of the First Schedule to this Act unless such arsenic is before the sale thereof mixed with soot or indigo in the proportion of one ounce of soot or half an ounce of indigo at the least to one pound of arsenic, and so in proportion for any greater or less quantity:

Provided that where arsenic is stated by the purchaser to be required for some purpose for which such admixture as aforesaid would, according to the representation of the purchaser, render it unfit, such arsenic may be sold without such admixture in a quantity of not less than ten pounds at any one time.

(2.) Any person selling arsenic in contravention of this section, also any purchaser obtaining arsenic without such admixture as aforesaid by means of a false representation respecting the purpose for which such arsenic is required, shall be liable, on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding *twenty pounds*.

(3.) For the purposes of this section, the expression "arsenic" includes arsenious acid and the arsenites, arsenic acid and the arseniates, and all other colourless poisonous preparations of arsenic.

Prohibition of sale of poisons by unqualified persons.

[31 & 32 Vict. c. 121. ss. 1, 15, 16, 32 & 33 Vict. c. 117. s. 1.]

4. (1.) A person shall not sell, or keep open shop for selling, dispensing, or compounding any substance mentioned in the first part or second part of the First Schedule to this Act, unless such person is qualified in manner in this Act mentioned, that is to say, is either—

(a) a pharmaceutical chemist; or

(b) a chemist and druggist; or

(c) a legally qualified medical practitioner who either was registered as such before the passing of the Act of the session of the thirty-second and thirty-third years of the reign of Her present Majesty, chapter one hundred and seventeen, intituled "An Act to amend the Pharmacy Act, 1868," or else, if registered as such after the passing of the said Act to amend the Pharmacy Act, 1868, has in order to obtain his diploma for such registration passed an examination in pharmacy:

31 & 32 Vi t. c. 121.

Provided that this section shall not prevent any person whose name is on the register of veterinary surgeons, or who at the time of the passing of the Veterinary Surgeons Act, 1881, held a veterinary certificate of the Highland and Agricultural Society of Scotland, from dispensing medicines for animals under his care.

(2.) Any person acting in contravention of this section shall be liable, on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding *five pounds*, and in case of a second or any subsequent conviction, not exceeding *ten pounds*.

5. (1.) A person shall not sell any substance mentioned in the first part or second part of the First Schedule to this Act to any person under the age of seventeen years.

(2.) A person shall not sell any substance mentioned in the first part of the First Schedule to this Act to any person unknown to the seller unless introduced by some person known to the seller.

(3.) Any person acting in contravention of this section shall be liable, on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding *five pounds*, and in case of a second or any subsequent conviction, not exceeding *ten pounds*.

6. (1.) On every sale of any substance mentioned in the first part of the First Schedule to this Act, the seller shall, before delivery, make or cause to be made an entry in a book to be kept for that purpose, stating in the form set forth in the Second Schedule to this Act, the date of the sale, the name and address of the purchaser, the name and quantity of the article sold, and the purpose for which it is stated by the purchaser to be required; and the signature of the purchaser and of the person (if any) who introduced him to the seller shall be affixed to such entry.

(2.) Any person selling any substance in contravention of this section shall be liable, on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding *five pounds*, and in case of a second or any subsequent conviction not exceeding *ten pounds*.

7. (1.) The Privy Council may from time to time make regulations as to the keeping, dispensing, and selling of substances mentioned in the first part or second part of the First Schedule to this Act by pharmaceutical chemists and by chemists and druggists, and may alter, add to, or rescind any such regulation.

(2.) Any pharmaceutical chemist or any chemist and druggist failing to conform with any such regulation shall be liable, on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding *five pounds* for each offence.

8. The Privy Council from time to time, by order, may add to any part of the First Schedule to this Act any poisonous substance to which, in their opinion, the provisions of this Act relating to the substances mentioned in that part ought to be made applicable, and may transfer any substance mentioned in any part of the said schedule, or any preparation of any such substance to any other part hereof, and may remove any substance from the said schedule; and any such substance or preparation as aforesaid, so added or transferred, shall be deemed to be a substance or preparation mentioned in the First Schedule to this Act, and in that part of the said schedule to which it is so added or transferred.

9. (1.) Where any medicine or drug contains any substance mentioned in the First Schedule to this Act in such amount as not to be poisonous if taken by the person or persons by whom, and in the quantities and manner in which, such medicine or drug is directed to be taken or used, but is or may be poisonous if taken or used by other persons or in other quantities or in any other manner than as aforesaid, a person shall not sell or expose or keep for sale such medicine or drug, unless the box, bottle, vessel, wrapper, or cover in which such medicine or drug is contained is distinctly labelled with the words "To be used with caution."

(2.) Any person who sells or exposes or keeps for sale any such medicine or drug as aforesaid, in contravention of this section, shall be liable, on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding *five pounds*, and in case of a second or any subsequent conviction, not exceeding *ten pounds*:

Provided that if the defendant in any prosecution under this section proves to the satisfaction of the court hearing the case that the medicine or drug in question was not dispensed or compounded by him, and that he purchased such medicine or drug with a written warranty to the effect that it was not of such a character as rendered it liable to be labelled in pursuance of this section, and that at the time when the said offence was committed he had no reason to believe that such medicine or drug was required to be so labelled, and that he sold such medicine or drug in the state in which he purchased it, he shall be discharged from the prosecution, but shall be liable to pay the costs incurred by the prosecutor unless he has given due notice to the prosecutor that he will rely on such defence as aforesaid.

10. For the purposes of this Act, the person on whose behalf or in whose service a sale is made or in which is done or omitted to be done by any apprentice or servant, shall be deemed to be the person making such sale or doing or omitting to do such act:

Provided that in the event of any contravention of or failure to comply with the provisions of this Act, or of any regulation made in pursuance of this Act, if the offence was in fact committed by an apprentice or servant of any person, such apprentice or servant shall be liable to the same fine as such person; and, if after the commission of the offence has been proved the court is satisfied that such apprentice or servant committed the offence in question without the knowledge, consent, or connivance, or wilful neglect or default of such person, the said person shall be exempt from any fine. A person shall be entitled, in any case provided for by this section, on information duly laid by him, to have any apprentice or servant whom he charges as the actual offender brought before the court at the time appointed for hearing the charge.

A.D. 1885.

Restriction on sale of poisons to certain persons.

[See 14 & 15 Vict. c. 13. s. 2, 31 & 32 Vict. c. 121. s. 17.]

Record of sale of poisons. [31 & 32 Vict. c. 121. s. 17.]

Privy Council to make regulations as to poisons in first and second parts of First Schedule

[See 31 & 32 Vict. c. 121. ss. 1, 15.]

Power to Privy Council to alter First Schedule.

[See 31 & 32 Vict. c. 121. s. 2.]

Provision with respect to certain medicines containing poison.

Liability of master for act of servant.

[See 31 & 32 Vict. c. 121. s. 17.]

A.D. 1885.

Provision as to association selling poisons.

11. A company or association shall not sell or keep open shop for selling, dispensing, or compounding any substance to which this Act applies except by the agency of a person employed by them for that purpose; and the provisions of this Act shall apply in the case of such person as if he were the person selling or keeping open shop for selling, dispensing, or compounding such substance; and any sale made or act done or omitted to be done in the service of the said company or association by any apprentice or servant shall for the purposes of this Act be deemed to have been done in the service of such person as aforesaid.

Application of Act to wholesale dealing.

[See 31 & 32 Viet. c. 121. ss. 16, 17.]

12. (1.) Nothing in this Act shall extend to or interfere with the business of wholesale dealers in supplying substances mentioned in the First Schedule to this Act in the ordinary course of wholesale dealing:

Provided that—

In the case of any sale by a wholesale dealer the box, bottle, vessel, wrapper, or cover in which any substance mentioned in the First Schedule to this Act is contained shall be distinctly labelled with the name of such substance and with the word "Poison."

(2.) If any sale is made by a wholesale dealer in contravention of this section the person making such sale shall be liable, on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding *five pounds*, and in case of a second or any subsequent conviction, not exceeding *ten pounds*.

Saving for medicine prescribed by medical practitioner.

[See 32 & 33 Viet. c. 117. s. 3.]

13. Nothing in this Act shall apply to the sale of any medicine or drug prescribed by a legally qualified medical practitioner for his patient and supplied to such patient by such practitioner or by a pharmaceutical chemist or chemist and druggist, if the box, bottle, vessel, wrapper, or cover in which such medicine or drug is contained is distinctly labelled with the name and address of the seller, and if the ingredients of such medicine or drug and the name of the person to whom it is sold or delivered are entered in a book to be kept by the seller for that purpose:

Provided that if such medicine or drug is prescribed for external use only, and either is a substance mentioned in the First Schedule to this Act or contains any such substance in such a quantity as to be poisonous, the box, bottle, vessel, wrapper, or cover, in which such medicine or drug is contained shall also be distinctly labelled with the word "Poison," and in default thereof the person supplying such medicine or drug shall, on summary conviction, be liable for each offence to a fine not exceeding *five pounds*.

Erasure of name from pharmaceutical register.

[31 & 32 Viet. c. 121. s. 26.]

14. Where any person registered under the Pharmacy Act, 1852, or the Pharmacy Act, 1868, is convicted of an offence against any of the provisions of this Act or of any regulation made in pursuance of this Act, the Privy Council may, if they think such person unfit by reason of such offence to be so registered, direct the name of such person to be erased from the register kept under the said Pharmacy Act, 1852, or the said Pharmacy Act, 1868, as the case may be, and it shall be the duty of the registrar under those Acts to erase the same accordingly.

Exercise of powers by Privy Council.

15. (1.) All powers vested in the Privy Council by this Act or by the Pharmacy Act, 1868, may be exercised by any two or more of the Lords and others of Her Majesty's most Honourable Privy Council.

(2.) A regulation made by the Privy Council in pursuance of this Act, or an order adding to, or removing from, the First Schedule to this Act any substance, or transferring any substance from one part to another part of the said schedule, shall be published in the *London Gazette*, and shall take effect on a day to be named in such regulation or order, being not less than *one month* after the date of the publication thereof as aforesaid.

Prosecution of offences.

16. An offence punishable under this Act on summary conviction may be prosecuted, and any fine recoverable on such conviction may be recovered in manner provided by the Summary Jurisdiction Acts.

For the purposes of this section—

The expression "the Summary Jurisdiction Acts,"

42 & 43 Viet. c. 49.

(a.) as regards England, has the same meaning as in the Summary Jurisdiction Act, 1879;

27 & 28 Viet. c. 53.

(b.) as regards Scotland, means the Summary Procedure Act, 1864, and any Acts amending the same;

14 & 15 Viet. c. 93.

(c.) as regards Ireland, means within the police district of Dublin metropolis the Acts regulating the powers and duties of justices of the peace of such district or of the police of such district, and elsewhere in Ireland the Petty Sessions (Ireland) Act, 1851, and the Acts amending the same.

Definitions.

31 & 32 Viet. c. 121.

17. The expressions "pharmaceutical chemist" and "chemist and druggist" mean respectively persons registered as such under the Pharmacy Act, 1852, and the Pharmacy Act, 1868, or one of those Acts.

The expression "Pharmacy Act, 1852," means the Act of the session of the fifteenth and sixteenth years of the reign of Her present Majesty, chapter fifty-six, intitled, "An Act for regulating the Qualifications of Pharmaceutical Chemists."

18. In the application of this Act to Ireland the following modifications shall be made:—

A.D. 1835.

(1.) The Lord Lieutenant or other chief governor or governors of Ireland for the time being, acting with the advice of the Privy Council in Ireland, shall be substituted for the Privy Council:

Application of Act to Ireland.

(2.) The Pharmacy Act (Ireland), 1875, shall be substituted for the Pharmacy Act, 1852, and the Pharmacy Act, 1868, where reference is made to either of those Acts:

38 & 39 Vict. c. 57.

(3.) The Dublin Gazette shall be substituted for the London Gazette:

19. The Acts mentioned in the Third Schedule to this Act are hereby repealed to the extent mentioned in the third column of the said schedule, except as to anything duly done or suffered thereunder before the day on which this Act takes effect, and except so far as may be necessary for the purpose of supporting and continuing any proceeding taken or of prosecuting or punishing any person for any offence committed before the day on which this Act takes effect.

Repeal.

20. This Act shall commence and take effect on the *first day of January one thousand eight hundred and eighty-six*; provided that the Privy Council may, at any time after the passing of this Act, make and publish any orders and regulations which they are authorised to make in pursuance of this Act; but such orders and regulations shall be of no effect until the said day on which this Act is declared to commence.

Commencement of Act.

SCHEDULES.

FIRST SCHEDULE.

FIRST PART.

Arsenic and its preparations.

Emetic tartar.

Corrosive sublimate.

Prussic acid and its preparations.

Cyanides of potassium and all metallic cyanides and their preparations.

Aconite and its preparations.

Strychnine and all poisonous vegetable alkaloids, their salts and preparations, except those mentioned in the second part of this schedule.

Digitalis and its preparations.

Savin and its preparations.

Ergot of rye and its preparations.

Cantharides.

SECOND PART.

Preparations of corrosive sublimate.

Red oxide of mercury (commonly known as red precipitate of mercury).

Ammoniated mercury (commonly known as white precipitate of mercury).

Oxalic acid and soluble oxalates.

Chloroform.

Chloral hydrate and its preparations.

Nitrobenzol and its preparations.

Essential oil of almonds unless deprived of its prussic acid.

Opium and all preparations of opium or of poppies.

Preparations of morphine.

Nux vomica and its preparations.

Belladonna and its preparations.

Lobelia and its preparations.

Digitalis and its preparations.

Indian hemp and its preparations.

The tincture and all liquid vesicating preparations of cantharides.

THIRD PART.

Sulphuric acid.

Hydrochloric acid.

Nitric acid.

Butter of antimony.

Carbolic acid.

Chloride of zinc and its solutions.

A.D. 1885.]

SECOND SCHEDULE.

Date	Name and Address of Purchaser	Name and Quantity of Poison Sold	Purpose for which it is Required	Signature of Purchaser	Signature of Person Introducing Purchaser

THIRD SCHEDULE.

PART I.

Session and Chapter	Title or Short Title	Extent of Repeal
14 & 15 Viet. c. 13. 31 & 32 Viet. c. 121.	An Act to regulate the sale of arsenic The Pharmacy Act, 1868.	The whole Act. In section one, the words "to sell or keep open shop for retail- ing, dispensing, or compounding poisons, or" and from "and conform" to the end of the section. Section two. In section fifteen, the words "who shall sell or keep an open shop for the retailing, dispensing, or compounding poisons, "or" and the words "or shall fail to conform with any regulation as to the keeping or selling of poisons made in pursuance of this Act." Section sixteen, to "dealing; and." Section seventeen. In section twenty-five, the words "and the seventh section of the Public Health Act, 1858, shall apply to all proceedings and acts of the Privy Council herein authorised." Schedules (A.) and (F.). The whole Act.
32 & 33 Viet. c. 117.	An Act to amend the Pharmacy Act, 1868.	

PART II.

Session and Chapter	Title or Short Title	Extent of Repeal
1 Geo. 3. c. 14. (Ire.)	An Act for preventing frauds and abuses in the vending, preparing, and administering drugs and medicines.	Section 21.
31 Geo. 3. c. 34. (Ire.)	An Act for the more effectually preserv- ing the health of His Majesty's subjects, for erecting an Apothecaries Hall in the city of Dublin, and regulating the pro- fession of an apothecary throughout the kingdom of Ireland.	So much of section 28 as relates to arsenic. Section 30. Section 31.
33 & 34 Viet. c. 26.	An Act to regulate the sale of poisons in Ireland.	The whole Act.
38 & 39 Viet. c. 57.	The Pharmacy Act (Ireland), 1875.	In section 30, the words "poisons within the meaning of the Act of the session of the thirty-third and thirty-fourth years of the reign of Her present Majesty, chapter twenty- six, or." In section 31, the words "of wholesale dealers in supplying poisons in the ordinary course of wholesale dealing, or," and the words "poisons or."

DISCUSSION IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

VERBATIM REPORT.

IN moving the second reading of this Bill in the House of Lords on Thursday last (March 19)

LORD CARLINGFORD said: My Lords, in moving the second reading of this Bill, I may say that the subject is for the regulation of the sale of poisons. It is very much easier to state the object of the Bill, in view of the importance of it—that of the protection of the public from the abuse of poisons—than to find an effectual means for providing a right and proper protection for the public, which the present law certainly does not provide, and which I will not undertake to say that any amendment of the present law, whatever amount of good it may do, will succeed in providing. But there has been for a long time past a wide-spread feeling in many quarters that fresh legislation ought to take place upon this subject, and demands to that effect have been made over and over again upon the Government. In the House of Commons Bills have been introduced for the purpose of improving and amending the law relating to the sale of poisons. Many important statements have been made and much anxiety expressed upon the subject. The Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons have been presenting memorials to the Government asking for fresh legislation, and, in many cases, coroners and juries have addressed the Home Office, calling their attention to cases of abuses of poisonous substances generally, of remedies which have proved in some cases poisonous, and calling upon the Home Office to provide a remedy. The Home Office has not proposed a remedy, but it has called upon the Privy Council to do so. The Privy Council dealt with the Pharmacy Act, so far as the Government is concerned with that Act, and the subject has been transferred to the Privy Council to deal with it. That is the reason why it falls to me to propose this Bill to your Lordships. My Lords, this Bill takes the law regulating the sale of poisons as it stands, or as it is contained among the provisions of what are called the Pharmacy Act of 1868, the Arsenic Act, and one or two other Acts. It proposes to re-enact those provisions in a clear and compact form within the moderate compass of this Bill, with additions, and, I hope, improvements, which may increase enough the efficacy of the law. The Bill proposes to take the whole subject of poisons out of the Pharmacy Act, and leave that Act solely to the subject of Pharmacy properly so called, and also to transfer to the Privy Council certain powers and duties which that Act imposes upon the Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain. Under that Act the Pharmaceutical Society was entrusted with the power of making regulations for the dispensing and sale of poisons by the pharmaceutical chemists, but they have not since 1868 seen their way to exercise those powers. The Bill proposes to transfer that power to the Privy Council. The Bill also transfers to the Privy Council the direct duty of adding any substance which it may be thought necessary to add to the list of poisons contained in the schedule to the Bill. That list of poisons is really a most essential part of the Bill. That power has hitherto been exercised by the Pharmaceu-

tical Society with the consent of the Privy Council. It is now proposed to impose that responsibility upon the Privy Council itself. I may shortly describe the nature of the Bill by stating the precautions—the several classes of precautions—with respect to the sale of poisons which the Bill proposes to enact. Most of them are already in existence, but some of them are enlarged, and others added to the present law. The Bill proposes five kinds of precautions with respect to the sale of poisons. First, with regard to the labelling portions. All poisons of every class are to be labelled with the word “poison,” and the name and address of the person selling the same. Secondly, with respect to the sellers of the poisons. Every seller of poisons of certain classes must be a qualified person, that is a chemist or druggist or a qualified medical practitioner. That provision will apply whether the sale takes place in an ordinary shop or on the premises of any company or association. It will also apply to the seller of any poison within the list in the schedule of the Bill, whether the substance sold has a Government stamp affixed to it or not, provided it comes within the schedule. There is another point—the restriction on the sale of poisons of certain classes. Well, under this Bill (and this is a new provision) those poisons will not be saleable to young persons under the age of seventeen, or to persons unknown to the seller, unless introduced by some person known to him. In the fourth place, as to the mode of selling poisons, a record will have to be kept of the sale of the poisons of a certain class, and of the name and address of the purchaser, and other particulars of the purchase. Lastly, the dispensing and selling of poisons will be subject to regulations of the Privy Council. These five classes of precautions, the whole applied to the more virulent, while some of them apply to the less virulent poisons. There is a special provision with respect to the Arsenic Act—now contained in the Arsenic Act—which will be brought in this Bill. Another provision which is now proposed with respect to the labelling of substances more or less dangerous will be as follows:—Substances obviously may be compounded in a manner such as not to make them poisonous in the ordinary acceptance of the term, or under ordinary conditions, if taken in moderate quantities, or taken by the persons for whom they are intended. In that case, the Bill proposes that the article compounded of that class shall be labelled not necessarily with the word “poison,” but with the words “to be used with caution.” It is believed that that will have a useful effect, because the common and indiscriminate use of the word “poison” is likely to have a dangerous effect in this matter. It is likely to make the word far too common, and to lessen the warning which the word has conveyed to those who buy or use the articles in question. Those are the general terms of the restrictions which the Bill proposes to enact. I now come to the first schedule of the Bill, which is really the essence of the Bill, and at the risk of repeating, though very shortly, something of what I have already said to the House as to the nature of the schedule, I must say a few words specially upon that. This schedule of poisons is one which obviously must depend upon the authority of the competent person who has to prepare it. It has been prepared with great care by the distinguished gentleman who is the medical officer of the Local Government Board, and who has also had the assistance of a distinguished specialist in this matter of poisons. The schedule which contains a list of poisons divided into three parts, as the Bill proposes to deal with them in three classes, may be thus described. I begin with the third part, which contains the less virulent and dangerous poisons. This part of the Bill is quite new. The poisonous matters contained in this third part of the schedule are not now dealt with by law at all. They

are substances which are very dangerous, but which may be described as something of which it would take a great deal to kill you—the substances not used especially in pharmacy, which I suppose is the reason why they were not proposed in the Pharmacy Act, but largely used in manufactures, and in the arts and for domestic purposes. I believe I may take carbolic acid as an example of one of them; but there are a number of domestic articles which would come under the scientific names contained in the schedule, and these, under the Bill, will in future not be saleable unless labelled “poison,” with the name of the substance, and the name and address of the seller. Then Part 2 of the schedule comprises the less intense of the substances which are commonly called and known as poisons—the type of which may be taken to be laudanum. These poisons will be subject to these conditions. They will be only saleable by a qualified chemist or chemist and druggist, or a duly qualified medical practitioner: they will not be saleable to any young person; and there are some other conditions in the Bill. Then the poisons contained in the first part of the schedule, which are the most virulent poisons, of which prussic acid may be taken as a type, will in addition to all the other restrictions which apply to all classes of poisons, be subject as many of them are now (the list is to be enlarged), and most of them, as they are now, will be subject to the condition that the buyer must be known to the seller, or introduced to him by some one whom he knows, and the seller must enter the whole transaction of the sale in a form as given in the schedule. Those are the conditions and restrictions for the protection of the public which it is proposed to enact relating to the sale of poisons by retail. The sale of poisons by wholesale we propose to leave as the law now leaves it, subject only to the restrictions that the substance must be labelled with the word “poison,” and the name and address of the seller. Now, my lords, I will just mention one subject which is sure to excite a good deal of interest on the part of persons who are interested by way of property in the matter—the subject, namely, of what are commonly but improperly called patent medicines. I said just now that the restrictions upon the sale of poisons coming within the meaning of the Bill and schedules would apply to all such sales, whether the thing sold bear the Government stamp or not. These so-called patent medicines are more properly proprietary medicines carrying the Government stamp—unfortunately, I think, the Government stamp—because it is apt to convey a meaning to the public which it has no right whatever to convey—viz. something like a guarantee for the nature and merits of the article sold, whereas it means nothing of the kind, and merely certifies that the article has paid a stamp-duty to the Government. My Lords, I am obliged to state it—I do not know whether it is treasonable to say so—but the Treasury gets 140,000*l.* a year from this stamp-duty. I am obliged to take the facts as I find them when dealing with patent-medicines. The Bill proposes to deal with them in this way. The Bill does not mention patent-medicines. The Bill makes no special provision for patent-medicines in any way, either by way of exemption or by way of restriction. It puts them as following certain words, after the Pharmacy Act—it puts patent-medicines absolutely upon the same footing that all other medicines are. It makes no distinction between the cases in which a certain medicine has been compounded by a certain person or not, or has paid Government stamp-duty or not—it puts them on the same footing in all cases if the compound in question comes within the terms of the Bill as a poison or a preparation of a poison. My Lords, it is of course obvious that the vast majority of patent-medicines cannot possibly come within

those terms, because of the great sale which we know they have: if that were so, the population of this country would certainly be considerably diminished before now. But there are some of those patent medicines which are supposed to contain a serious amount of poisonous ingredients, generally opium and laudanum. Many of the most valuable medicines do contain a certain amount of some poisonous substance. The real question is, what that proportion is, and whether it is beneficial, harmless, or dangerous. Well, my lords, the Bill does not attempt to define what a dangerous proportion of poisonous substance in a compound is or may be. We have found it impossible, as others have found it impossible, to provide any definition of the word “poison.” I never could get a definition which could be properly put into an Act of Parliament, and I have looked out a good many of them. I may tell your lordships the definition given by Dr. Johnson, which is this. He defines poisons in this way—“That which destroys or injures life by a small quantity, and by means not obvious to the senses.” That definition is certainly not one to be put into an Act of Parliament. Now, again, as to the proportion of poisonous matter which should be taken to constitute the substance of a compound containing it a poison within the meaning of the law, we have not seen our way to lay down any rule. The law, therefore, would stand in this way. The person selling any compound of this class, whether it bear the stamp or not, will have to take the choice and run his risk in the way he sells them. If he believes it to be innocuous, and not to come within the meaning of the word poison, or preparation of poison, in this Bill and these schedules, he may of course sell it freely without the restrictions of this Bill or of the present law. But then he will run his risk. If in any particular case of any particular medicine, whether it be a patent medicine or not—there is no difference in name—if it should be proved upon judicial investigation in any particular case, it should be found that the compound was a poison—that is a matter of common sense—and within the meaning of the Bill a poison or a preparation of a poison which contained the dangerous qualities and effects of the poison, then that person, having so sold that article not subject to the restrictions and conditions of the Bill, if convicted, will be liable to a penalty, and that article having become a poison, it will not be for the future be indiscriminately saleable, but will come within this meaning of poisons, and will only be saleable under the restrictions of the Bill. Of course the person so selling such an article, whether the seller or the proprietor, will then have the choice of two courses which he may take. He may either submit to the restrictions of the Bill, and to the sale of the article in which he is interested, or else—which I should think would very likely happen if a question is likely to be raised—he may remove or reduce the dangerous ingredient in the compound, so as to render it harmless and innocuous, and outside the provisions of the Bill. That would be a very wholesome effect indeed from the provisions of this Bill. It would make it the interest of all the compounders and sellers of those compounds, whether they had paid the Government stamp or not, to reduce to a minimum poisonous ingredients contained in the mixture, which in itself may be perfectly harmless or wholesome, but which with an excessive amount of the poisonous ingredients may be injurious, and even prove to be dangerous to human life and health. I have not been able to carry the definitions to a point which would make it possible to meet any particular case in which a compound should be declared poisonous or not, but we throw the responsibility—which I think may be fairly done in the interests of the public, and without any injury to the persons interested—we throw the responsibility

upon the manufacturers and sellers of those compounds to take care that they shall be compounded, and not come within the meaning of poisons under this Bill. My lords, I do not know there is anything more at this stage of the Bill with which I need trouble your lordships. I do not profess to think that this or any Bill will or can provide protection to the public against carelessness, stupidity, or crime, but I am in great hope that the Bill will effect a considerable improvement in the law, and considerably increase that protection we desire to afford.

Viscount BARRINGTON (who was not distinctly heard): My lords, I regret that this Bill applies only to the sale of poisons by retail. I understood the noble lord to say that the sale of poisons by wholesale was sufficiently cared for by the present law. (Lord Carlingford assented.) Also I would remind the noble lord that complaints have been made with regard to manufacturers of poisonous papers, and that the sale of them by these manufacturers is extremely dangerous to human life. Now, if matters remain in this state, manufacturers will be in a position to sell these poisonous papers as before.

The Earl of MILLTOWN: My lords, I do not rise to speak on this Bill particularly. My object is only to utter my protest against the course which has been pursued with regard to this Bill. It was read the first time in order to be printed so long ago as the 9th of this month, and yet it was not until yesterday it was delivered to your Lordships. Now, it is all very well to initiate legislation in this House, but I think, unless your Lordships are given fair time for considering measures that are brought forward, that it will prove detrimental. This Bill was actually down for second reading last Thursday, although the Bill was not then even printed.

Duke of MARLBOROUGH: My Lords, in the list of scheduled poisons I observe no mention made of phosphorus, and as that is one of the most deadly poisons, I think it is a thing not to allow the sale of. There is also another subject. I see by this Bill that there is no restriction on the wholesale sale of poisons. It may not be in the knowledge of the noble lord that the wholesale houses are in the habit of carrying on both a wholesale and retail trade, and it is a question to notice that there should be some provision to prevent wholesale houses dealing on retail principles with private customers, and there ought to be some special provision made, either by the Privy Council or elsewhere, in regard to this practice. I venture to suggest that consideration to the noble Lord.

Lord CARLINGFORD, in reply, said: I do not know whether the noble duke meant that some restriction should be placed on the wholesale dealer dealing by way of retail.

The Duke of MARLBOROUGH: Yes.

Lord CARLINGFORD: I am not sure at this moment how the Bill affects that case; but I think it may be worth considering. As to the schedules, although they have been prepared with very great care, it is very probable that they ought to be enlarged; and, should the Bill become law, the Privy Council will have the power of enlarging them at any time. But I find that these scientifically-prepared schedules contain a great many things which one does not suspect. I do not know whether it applies to phosphorus; but I have asked why such and such a substance has been left out of the schedule, and it has been pointed out to me that under the language of the schedule such substances are included. But I will look into that narrowly. As to the question of time, I have no reason for pressing the Bill, and, if the noble lord desires it, I will bring it forward at any date that is convenient to him. Will this day week suit your lordship?

The Earl of MILLTOWN: My observations had no special reference to the Bill; they were perfectly general.

The Bill was then read a second time.

ANALYSIS OF THE POISONS BILL.

THE Lords of the Privy Council have at last submitted to Parliament their long-promised scheme of legislation in reference to the sale of poisons. Their Bill seems to us so important, and in some respects so injurious to pharmacists, that we have decided to submit a full copy of it, together with a report of the discussion on the second reading in the House of Lords to our subscribers at the earliest possible moment.

It will be seen that by the new Bill it is proposed to consolidate into one Act all the general legislation concerning the sale of poisons, and letting the same Act govern such sales in Ireland as well as in Great Britain.

SALE OF ARSENIC.

By clauses 3 and 4, the provisions of the Arsenic Act of 1851 are transferred to the Bill. The only remark which need be made in reference to this is, that a convenience would be gained by the fact that a special "arsenic book" would no longer be necessary. Sales of arsenic would be entered in the ordinary "poisons book," the one form being made suitable for all poisons. The extra precautions in regard to arsenic (as to colouring, &c.) are not changed.

VENDORS OF POISONS.

Clause 4 defines the persons who may sell or keep open shops for selling substances named in parts 1 and 2 of the poison schedule. These persons are practically the same as those who at present have the right of making such sales.

POISONS WHICH MAY BE SOLD BY NON-REGISTERED PERSONS.

Here we may allude to Part 3 of the poison schedule. This feature of the Bill is unfortunately not new to us. The Pharmaceutical Council incorporated it in their draft Bill, and that fact must weaken to a great extent the opposition which the trade can now offer to this most objectionable innovation. The Government plan is more reasonable than that proposed by the Pharmaceutical Council. The latter body suggested that sulphuric, hydrochloric, and nitric acid, butter of antimony, and carbolic acid should be classed as "poisonous"; but that any person might sell them if labelled with the name of the substance, with the word "poisonous," and with the name and address of the seller. The Privy Council add "chloride of zinc and its solutions" to the list, but make no distinction as to labelling between these substances and those in the second part of the schedule: they would apply the word "poison" in the one case as well as in the other, and this, we think, is the better course. The introduction of the modified term "poisonous" was indefensible.

But we have to face the evident determination of the Privy Council to introduce the principle of allowing persons, not chemists and druggists, to sell legal "poisons," and, in the interests of the public as well as in their own, we hope the trade will unitedly oppose this principle. At present the law provides that only registered chemists and druggists shall be permitted to sell such substances as are defined as poisons. By this means a guarantee is provided that these dangerous articles shall pass to the public through the hands of men specially trained to an expert acquaintance with their nature. The Privy Council have been pressed to make new provisions for the safety of the public, and they commence their work

by removing the surest protection which the public can have! According to Dr. Wynter Blyth (*Poisons: their Effects and Detection*) during the ten years 1871-1880 carbolic acid was responsible for 183 cases of poisoning out of every 1,000. Arsenic, which seems to be so much more dreaded, was a long way behind in its deadly effects, as only 79 per 1,000 of the cases recorded were credited to this poison. And yet the Privy Council are willing that carbolic acid should be sold at all oil and grocery stores, by persons who have but the remotest notion of its nature, who supply it in wine, gin, or soda-water bottles, and to whom the attachment of a label will be an entirely novel experience!

Two years ago, it may be remembered, we asked the opinion of all the coroners of England and Wales on this and cognate topics. Out of 74 answers received, 54 were positively clear that the sale of carbolic acid ought to be limited to chemists; of the remaining 20 not more than 4 or 5 expressed the opinion that it was desirable that other traders should be allowed to sell it, and the rest were either neutral or gave qualified opinions.

SALE OF POISONS TO YOUNG PERSONS.

Now passing on to Clause 5 of the Bill, we find the novel provision that no poison named in the first and second parts of the schedule may be sold to any person under seventeen years of age. Country chemists will best appreciate the benefits of this section. A fine of 5% or 10% for every sale of a pennyworth of white or red precipitate or of syrup of poppies to children may seem a wise provision to the House of Peers, but there is an air of absurdity about it to those who have served behind the counter. But supposing it to be justifiable, where is the reasonableness of excluding Part 3 from the provision? Can babes and sucklings be better trusted with aqua fortis and carbolic acid than with the gentle "Godfrey's," or is it that the Privy Council do not see their way to control the dealers in the poisons of the third part? If this be the case, as it probably is, the argument against the introduction of the third part is complete.

RECORD OF SALES.

Clause 6 provides for the record of the sale of poisons named in the first part of the schedule just as at present.

REGULATIONS FOR STORING POISONS.

Clause 7 demands careful reading. The Privy Council are to have power to make regulations as to the keeping, dispensing, and selling of substances mentioned in the first or second part of the schedule.

Again, it will be observed no regulations are to be made to compel careful storage of oil of vitriol, nitric acid, or carbolic acid. These may still be kept, as they generally are now, by oilmen and grocers in wine or syrup bottles, and in close proximity with all other household requisites; but regulations are to be reserved for pharmaceutical chemists and chemists and druggists. We believe the majority of chemists who recognise the desirability of keeping poisons with the utmost carefulness would not refuse their consent to some well thought-out provisions, which would tend to ensure the safety of the public. We know very well the sentimental objections to any interference which have been raised, and will be raised again; but we are confident these will have less weight than they formerly had. But to hand over the whole body of pharmacists—the men, be it remembered, who are especially trained to the handling of dangerous substances—men, as a rule, of education and responsibility—to hand over these, bound hand and foot, to one or two medical

advisers of the Privy Council, who may or may not be qualified to exercise their power discreetly, and to give the former no voice whatever in making the regulations referred to, is a proposal which, it must be said, passes the bounds of insult, and drops into the region of pure silliness.

ALTERING THE POISON SCHEDULE.

Clause 8 would give the Privy Council *carte blanche* in regard to the poison schedule, and would give them power, if they so willed, to transfer all poisons named in the first and second parts to the third part, and thus to re-establish, whenever they please, absolute free trade in poisons.

PATENT MEDICINES.

Clause 9 is apparently intended to apply to so-called patent medicines. It will be observed that the provision in Clause 16 of the Pharmacy Act, 1868, exempting "the making or dealing in patent medicines" from all thereinbefore contained, is to be repealed. Consequently it would seem that patent medicines containing any poison named in Parts 1 or 2 of the schedule could only be sold by chemists and druggists, and would have to be labelled in accordance with the statute; but the use of the word "poison," name of poison, and name and address of the seller (this is what we understand from the complicated syntax of Clause 9) may be dispensed with, and the simple words "to be used with caution," substituted, in cases where it can be shown that the medicine is not poisonous if taken by such persons and in such doses as are intended by the makers. As no patent medicine maker can be supposed to deliberately intend murder, this very mild interference with the patent medicine trade may be taken to betoken a high degree of respect on the part of the Privy Council for the power of the body. Judging by the rest of the Bill, we should suppose that leaving the chemists exclusive right to sell any of these medicines must be an oversight.

WHO IS THE SELLER?

Clause 10 aims to settle the difficulty which has arisen respecting the proportion of personal responsibility for contravention of the requirements of the law, of the master and of his servant or apprentice respectively. This clause we believe to be a mistake, and one which would in practice to a great extent destroy all the effect of the Act. Far better is it to leave the master of a shop responsible for all that is done therein, either by himself or by his servants.

COMPANIES AND THE SALE OF POISONS.

Clause 11 is the answer of the Government to the claim of pharmacists that the Pharmacy Act shall be enforced in its integrity. The judges almost apologised for having to reduce that Act to an absurdity by declaring that a company might do what was prohibited to a person. The Privy Council have decided to legalise and establish the right of companies to carry on a dispensing business if they employ a qualified assistant.

WHOLESALE DEALING.

By Clause 12 wholesale dealing is left in the position in which it now stands, except that it is required that poisons so sold shall be labelled with the word "poison," and with the name of the poison.

DISPENSING POISONS.

The influence of the medical element is distinctly traceable in Clause 13. This supersedes the exemption provisions in relation to medicines prescribed and dispensed which were

contained in the Amendment Act of 1869. But there is a marked difference in the wording, as will be seen by comparing the corresponding passages, which we give below:—

FROM THE PHARMACY AMENDMENT
ACT, 1869.

SECTION III.—Nothing contained in Section 17 of the said recited Act shall apply to any medicine supplied by a legally qualified medical practitioner to his patient or dispensed by any person registered under the said Act, provided such medicine be distinctly labelled with the name and address of the seller, and the ingredients thereof be entered, with the name of the person to whom it is sold or delivered, in a book to kept by the seller for that purpose.

FROM THE N. W. BILL.

13. Nothing in this Act shall apply to the sale of any medicine or drug prescribed by a legally qualified medical practitioner for his patient and supplied to such patient by such practitioner or by a pharmaceutical chemist or chemist and druggist, if the box, bottle, vessel, wrapper, or cover in which such medicine or drug is contained is distinctly labelled with the name and address of the seller, and if the ingredients of such medicine or drug and the name of the person to whom it is sold or delivered are entered in a book to be kept by the seller for that purpose.

It is probable that this is intended as an attack on the direct supply by chemists of medicines not prescribed by medical men. Medicines supplied by order of duly-qualified medical practitioners are to be, as they now are, exempt from the requirements of the law. But any medicines supplied or dispensed by chemists without such a prescription are to be fully labelled, or at least would have to bear the label imposed by Clause 9, "To be used with caution."

REMOVAL FROM THE REGISTER.

By Clause 14 the Privy Council is to hold the power of rasing from the register the name of any chemist who may infringe any of the regulations prescribed under this Act.

The remaining sections of the Bill are not of importance, but those we have commented on show the animus entertained towards the trade by the officials of the Privy Council.

Until this Bill was printed we had great hopes that the government scheme would offer a hopeful prospect of settling the various difficulties which have arisen in respect to the sale of poisons to the advantage of the public and with satisfaction to pharmacists. We have constantly urged the latter not to expect anything like protection, and we were prepared to advocate any fair scheme calculated to lessen the risk of accidental or intentional poisoning which might be devised. But in this extraordinary Bill we see so little protection to the public, so many impracticable proposals, and so much distinct animosity to pharmacists—who, after all, will continue to be the chief distributors of poisons—that we cannot perceive much hope of satisfactory results by trying to amend it.

We believe that the Pharmaceutical Council were ill-advised in regard to their draft Bill. We have given our reasons for that opinion over and over again. They tried to use the opportunity presented to them too much to their own advantage. But if they made a mistake in that respect that is no sufficient reason why they should be so contemptuously ignored as they have been by the framers of this Bill. It will be noticed that their powers in respect to the sale of poisons are taken from them almost completely. We have criticised their conduct at times, but we recognise them as the official representatives of pharmacy in this country, and we know well that in carrying out the provisions of the Pharmacy Act they have manifested an almost too scrupulous regard for the interests of the public—at least, whenever

these have seemed to clash with the interests of the trade. If they should now decide to organise a determined opposition to this Bill, and insist on the right to take part in framing one to take its place, they may depend, we believe, on the general sympathy and support of the trade; and we hope to see them take such a course, laying aside, for a time, all their fanciful notions about the curriculum, the division of the examinations, and the development of high pharmacy.

THE NEW POISONS SCHEDULE.

THE additions and omissions proposed in the new Poisons Schedule, as compared with that of the Act of 1868, are some of them important. In the latter, "strychnine and all poisonous vegetable alkaloids and their salts" were included in the first part, and preparations of strychnine and atropine were afterwards added. It will be seen that the preparations of all poisonous vegetable alkaloids are now included in the first part, except *preparations of morphine*, which remain in the second part. It seems quite possible that the ptomaines, poisonous animal alkaloids, may come into use as medicines, so that the word "vegetable" might be omitted without injury. *Savin and its preparations* is substituted for *savin and its oil*. Digitalin and its preparations are included for the first time—this being a glucoside, and not covered by the expression "vegetable alkaloids." It is difficult to see why a general expression, "and all poisonous glucosides," should not be added here. Vermin-killers, being preparations of poisons in this part of the schedule, are not specifically mentioned, though still included.

In the second part the additions are "soluble oxalates," covering salts of lemon, "nitrobenzol and its preparations," "digitalis and its preparations," "Indian hemp and its preparations," interfering with all the modern corn-cures composed of this substance and salicylic acid, and probably, most important of all, "Lobelia and its preparations." This article is one of the mainstays of the herbal-medicine maker; it was the subject of a carefully-argued prosecution in January of last year, when the combined efforts of legal and medical experts could not convince the jury that the drug was poisonous, but only that it was disputed. The inclusion of this drug shows the same disregard for the interests of the herbalists that the other parts of the Bill display towards the chemists and druggists; and in both cases the advantage to be gained by the public is disputable, if not entirely imaginary. So little love is lost between the herbalists and the registered druggists that, probably, not even this community of injury will cause them to unite. The line "vermin-killers" is omitted from the second part of the schedule also. Neither by the Act of 1868 nor by the present Bill is the sale of phosphorus and its preparations, such as phosphor-paste, subject to any control. This omission was pointed out by the Duke of Marlborough, and will probably be remedied.

THE death is announced of Mr. Charles Thomas, the editor of the *Repertoire de Pharmacie*, in his 31st year. He had taken his diploma as a pharmacien, but had occupied himself chiefly with laboratory work, and a few years since succeeded M. Lebaigue in the editorial management of the journal named.

THE proprietors of Liebig's Chemical Food are very anxious to obtain information concerning some firm or manufacturer who is supplying chemists with an imitation of their product with a forged label. They offer 200*l.* reward for sufficient information, and we have reason to believe that this offer is quite *bonâ fide*, and is not merely the ordinary advertisement heading.

PARTS OF THE PHARMACY AND OTHER ACTS TO
BE REPEALED BY THIS BILL.

PHARMACY ACT, 1868.

Words in brackets to be repealed.

SECTION I.—“From and after December 31, 1868, it shall be unlawful for any person [to sell or keep open shop for retailing, dispensing, or compounding poisons, or] to assume or use the title ‘chemist and druggist,’ and so forth, “unless such person shall . . . be registered under this Act [and conform to such regulations as to the keeping, dispensing and selling of such poisons as may from time to time be prescribed by the Pharmaceutical Society with the consent of the Privy Council]. The object of the repeals in this and the next section is to remove the subject of the sale of poisons from the Pharmacy Act and the control thereof from the hands of the Pharmaceutical Society to those of the Privy Council. The obligation of registered chemists to obey the Act and the regulations of the Privy Council is continued by Section 14 of the Bill.

SECTION II., THE WHOLE SECTION.—“[The several articles named or described in the schedule (A) shall be deemed to be poisons within the meaning of this Act, and the Council of the Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain (hereinafter referred to as the Pharmaceutical Society) may from time to time, by resolution, declare that any article in such resolution named ought to be deemed a poison within the meaning of this Act; and thereupon the said Society shall submit the same for the approval of the Privy Council, and if such approval shall be given, then such resolution and approval shall be advertised in the *London Gazette*, and, on the expiration of one month from such advertisement, the article named in such resolution shall be deemed to be a poison within the meaning of this Act.]”

SECTION XV.—“From and after December 31, 1868, any person [who shall sell, or keep an open shop for the retailing, dispensing, or compounding poisons, or] who shall take, use, or exhibit the name or title ‘chemist and druggist,’ and so forth, “[or shall fail to conform with any regulations as to the keeping or selling of poisons, made in pursuance of this Act;] or who shall compound any medicines of the British Pharmacopœia, except according to the formularies of the said Pharmacopœia,” shall be liable to certain penalties.

SECTION XVI.—“[Nothing hereinbefore contained shall extend to or interfere with the business of any legally-qualified apothecary, or of any member of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons of Great Britain, nor with the making or dealing in patent medicines, nor with the business of wholesale dealers in supplying poisons in the ordinary course of wholesale dealing; and] upon the decease of any pharmaceutical chemist” and so forth, the business may be carried on under certain regulations. The exemption of veterinary surgeons was extended by the Amending Act of 1869. Section 1, to all holding certificates in veterinary surgery from the Highland and Agricultural Society of Scotland, and by Section 4 of the Bill is further extended to all persons whose names are on the register of veterinary surgeons. The business of wholesale dealers is dealt with by Section 12 of the Bill; all parcels of substances mentioned in the first schedule are to be labelled “poison.”

SECTION XVII.—The whole section is repealed. It details the well-known regulations to be observed in the sale of poisons, the penalties for breaches thereof and the manner of their recovery, and exempts from the action of the first part of the schedule all wholesale dealing and all dispensing by qualified apothecaries, or by persons registered under the Act.

By Section 13 of the Bill such medicines are exempted only when prescribed by a duly qualified medical practitioner for his patient, and supplied to such patient.

SECTION XXV.—“On and after the passing of this Act all powers vested by the Pharmacy Act in one of Her Majesty’s Principal Secretaries of State shall be vested in the Privy Council [and the seventh Section of the Public Health Act, 1858, shall apply to all proceedings and acts of the Privy Council herein authorised].”

This Section of the Public Health Act only concerns the orders of the Privy Council, and the evidence on which such orders shall be received in courts of justice. Schedules A and F are repealed. Schedule A gives the list of poisons under the Act and Schedule and the form of the poisons register.

IRELAND.

PHARMACY ACT, IRELAND, 1875.

SECTION XXX.—“So much of the Act of 1791 as prohibits the keeping of open shop within the meaning of the said Act by any person other than a licentiate of Apothecaries Hall shall be repealed; provided always that it shall be unlawful for any person to sell or keep open shop for retailing, dispensing, or compounding [poisons within the meaning of the Act of the session of the thirty-third and thirty-fourth years of the reign of Her present Majesty, chapter twenty-six, or] medical prescriptions, unless such person be registered as a pharmaceutical chemist,” and so forth.

SECTION XXXI.—“Nothing in this Act contained shall extend to or interfere with the making or dealing in patent medicines or with the business [of wholesale dealers in supplying poisons in the ordinary course of wholesale dealing, or] of chemists and druggists who are practising as such in Ireland upon their own account at the time of the passing of this Act, save and except the provisions against the compounding of [poisons or] medical prescriptions,” and so forth.

It is to be noted that “patent medicines” in Ireland means medicines that are actually protected by Letters Patent; which protection endures for fourteen years only; not, as in England, any medicine recommended for certain diseases, or in the manufacture of which some occult secret is claimed, on which, in consequence, an Inland Revenue stamp must be affixed.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

On Monday, March 16, Mr. Puleston asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether his attention had been called to the following, from an article in the *Lancet*, viz. :—

“Scarcely a day passes without the record in the papers of an inquest on some poor deluded victim who has been sent to his last account from an over-weening confidence in one or other of the much-belauded patent medicines. The facility afforded for obtaining a narcotic, whether it be in the form of opium, morphia, or the deadly chloral, is a consideration which cannot be overlooked. In no other country can poisons be purchased wholesale without a strict inquiry as to the purpose for which they are required, but in England they are sold openly, and without restriction, under the guise of patent medicines.” And, whether, having reference to the proposed legislation on this subject, he would cause inquiry to be made, with a view to obviating the evils arising from such a condition of things if they were shown to be as stated.

Mr. CHILDERS, in reply, said: I am afraid that, considering the very large number of notices on this subject in both directions, which have appeared in medical or other newspapers, it is quite out of my power to give an opinion on any particular observation contained in them. I do not even know when the article to which the hon. member refers appeared, and this question gives no date. I have already stated that the whole matter has been the subject of careful inquiry, and that legislation will be proposed either in this or next session.